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number the names of *Bailly* and *Voltaire*. This inference is besides in conformity with the general analogy of nature.

The only arguments which afford a specious pretence for those who maintain that there are more races of men than one, are the great physical diversity and the insulated situation of the American and Negro nations. Many naturalists have contended, that these races form distinct species from the European; and this is the point on which the question as to the unity or plurality of races chiefly hinges. We shall not enter into this inquiry, which is strictly physiological, our present concern being only with languages and historical facts. But besides the physical diversities which may perhaps be attributed to climate, or other causes, the native people of America are so cut off from the rest of mankind, they were, when discovered by Europeans, so destitute of those primary means and resources by which life is sustained and preserved, such as the use of the cereal gramina, of milk, and of domestic animals, that many authors have been disposed, from these circumstances, to look upon them as an indigenous race. The contrary position, however, is every day receiving illustration. The arts and sciences of the Mexicans and Peruvians have been clearly proved to be of Asiatic origin, and in this instance, as in several particular examples, the comparison of languages has afforded useful aid. Professor Vater was, we believe, the first to announce the discovery, that the Tschuktschi in Asia speak the same language with the Esquimaux and Greenlanders. With the assistance of the materials collected by Mr. Humboldt, he has also very much extended the number of coincidences between the dialects of the hunting tribes of America and the Tungusians and other Asiatics, and seems to have ascertained the fact which Dr. Barton has the merit of having first suggested.

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## ART. XXII. STATE OF THE MADHOUSES IN ENGLAND.

*Report, together with the Minutes of Evidence, and an Appendix of Papers, from the Committee appointed to consider of Provision being made for the better Regulation of Madhouses in England. [Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 11th July, 1815.] Each subject of Evidence arranged under its distinct Head. By J. B. Sharpe, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons. 8vo. pp. 411. London. Baldwin and Co.*

*Description of the Retreat, an Institution near York, for Insane Persons of the Society of Friends: containing an Account of its*



*Origin and Progress, the Modes of Treatment, and a Statement of Cures.* By Samuel Tuke. York. 1813.

*A History of the York Lunatic Asylum: with an Appendix, containing Minutes of the Evidence on the Cases of Abuse lately inquired into by a Committee, &c. Addressed to W. Wilberforce, Esq., one of the Contributors to Lapton's Fund.* York. 1815.

*Practical Hints on the Construction and Economy of Pauper Lunatic Asylums; including Instructions to the Architects who offered Plans for the Wakefield Asylum, and a Sketch of the most approved Design.* By Samuel Tuke. York. 1815.

IT is a celebrated observation of one of the most admired of the European philosophers, that in all the countries through which the traveller proceeds, he will find a measure of the civilization to which they have attained, in the condition of the roads. The circumstance, it will be owned, is characteristic; and the remark sagacious. But there is another test, far more constant and infallible, of the civilization, or barbarity, of different countries; and that is, the degree of legislative care bestowed upon the more helpless portions of our species.

In rude and barbarous ages the attention which the miserable attract is little indeed. The efforts which, in such periods, legislation displays, are almost wholly directed towards the depression of the more helpless classes, and to the means of retaining them in a state of perfect subservience to the interests and will of the powerful. By this, in earlier ages, the powers of legislation are engrossed, and by this they are exhausted. In tracing the history of human happiness and misery, it is interesting to observe, as knowledge increases, how one thing after another is done for this more numerous portion of the species; at first reluctantly and slowly; by degrees more cheerfully and with a quicker succession; at first in the way of bounty alone; afterwards by the communication of a small number of rights, which are slowly augmented, till, at length, the ultimate triumph of legislation is displayed, in a code of laws not less favourable to the poor in reaping the fruits of their labour, than to the rich in expending the produce of their stock and lands.

Among the helpless portions of the species, there are two sorts, of whom the helplessness is to be regarded as the most complete and deplorable; these are prisoners, and the insane. It appears, from the experience both of existing and of antecedent facts, that it requires a very high degree of civilization to produce a legislative provision capable of preventing the miseries which neglect must entail upon those who are incapacitated for taking care of themselves. It is not to be expected, that

the happiness or misery of persons in such circumstances, should occupy for an hour the thoughts of those who first mould the institutions of civil society. But it is remarkable, that notwithstanding the refinement to which in our own country civilization has in most respects attained, the care of the imprisoned and the insane is a new feature of our legislation. The years are not many since Howard, the pride and boast of our land, a character more difficult to form than that of any of the heroes whom, from the beginning of the world, the folly of man has inshrined, first pointed out the physical and moral condition of British prisoners to the attention of their countrymen. Since his time some legislative efforts have been made, and these, with the awakened attention of the public, have rectified many abuses: it is known, however, to all, with how much difficulty, and how sparingly, the legislature has moved, and how small a portion is yet achieved of the great and beneficent work we are contemplating. At the same time it is consoling to reflect, that as each successive step has been stronger and quicker than that which preceded, we may with some confidence look to a vigorous and steady progress in the time to come.

The march of the legislature has been more than ordinarily slow in providing against the miseries liable to be endured by the insane. The formation of the Committee, from whom we have derived the present reports, is nearly the first arrangement that has been made to procure information upon the subject. The act which, a number of years ago, was passed for the purpose of establishing some regulations with regard to private madhouses, was framed for the protection, not so much of those who were, as those who were not insane; that no person might be subject to wrongful confinement: and it was framed under so much ignorance of the circumstances which it undertook to regulate, that it is declared by the existing Committee of the Honourable House, to be altogether inadequate to the exigencies of the case; which present an urgent and irresistible demand for a new and better provision.

The Report, presented to the House of Commons toward the close of the last Session of Parliament, commences with the following emphatical words: "Your Committee, deeply sensible of the importance of the matter referred to their consideration, have applied themselves with great earnestness to the performance of the duty imposed on them by the House.—Your Committee cannot hesitate to suggest, with the utmost confidence, from the evidence they now offer to the House, that some new provision of law is indispensably necessary for ensuring better care being taken of insane persons, both in England and Ireland, than they have hitherto experienced; the number of whom appear to be

very considerable: as the inquiries of the Committee have convinced them, that there are not, in the country, a set of beings more immediately requiring the protection of the legislature than the persons in this state, a very large proportion of whom are entirely neglected by their relations and friends. If the treatment of those in the middling or in the lower classes of life, shut up as insane in hospitals, private madhouses, or parish workhouses, is looked at, your Committee are persuaded that a case cannot be found, where the necessity for a remedy is more urgent."

It is of importance to adduce some of the testimonies presented in the evidence, which affirm the egregious imperfections of the existing act. Dr. Weir, Inspector of Naval Hospitals, having minutely described the treatment of the naval patients maintained at the expense of Government in the madhouse of Sir Jonathan Miles, at Hoxton, was asked, "What is your opinion as to the present system of managing insane persons throughout the kingdom, as far as your observation and experience have gone?—From the gross mismanagement and abuses that have existed and still continue to exist at Hoxton, under the immediate inspection of the present commissioners for regulating maniacal institutions, I am fully satisfied, that nothing less than a newly constituted establishment will ever be sufficient to correct the abuses that have crept in universally, both at the public and private institutions; and to place, at the same time, those long-neglected and pitiable objects on such a footing, as to ensure their future comfort, as far as is consistent with their respective maladies."

Dr. Richard Fowler, of Salisbury, was asked, "Are you of opinion, that the provisions of the Act of the fourteenth of the King, now in force, are sufficient to answer the purposes intended by it?—It appears to me they are totally inefficient. It has always struck both the magistrates and myself, that our visits were quite inefficient. It appeared to me that they were inefficient upon a great number of points; that they were inefficient as to ascertaining whether we had, or had not, seen all the rooms appropriated to patients belonging to the house; that they were inefficient inasmuch as we had no means of ascertaining when persons appeared to be tolerably sane at the time, whether it is a lucid interval, or permanent."

Dr. Powell, the Secretary to the Commissioners for regulating madhouses, delivered to the Committee a letter, addressed by him to a member of the Upper House of Parliament, on the occasion of a proposal for the amendment of the existing law, in which it is said, "The Commissioners propose to submit to your Lordship a very general view of the insufficiencies

of the Act in its present form, &c.—They deem it unnecessary to detain your Lordship with a detail of inaccuracies of verbal expressions in the Act, although such are numerous, and productive of much inconvenience in the execution of it.—That various defects in the provisions of the Act generally do exist, appears from the minutes of the commissioners—the necessity for their frequent recourse to legal advice—and the publications of the proceedings of courts of law. Your Lordship's recent information in the county of Wilts is one proof, among many, that similar defects are felt in the more distant counties of England.—That the verbal expression of those provisions is not in all instances clearly made, may be illustrated by an opinion of the late Lord Kenyon in 1782, which begins thus;—‘ I cannot give a receipt to provide for the inaccuracies of an ill-penned law.’ ”

In endeavouring to form an estimate of the information which the labours of this Committee have furnished to the legislature, the imperfections of the existing law must be regarded as the article by far the most important. It is true the public had not, by the benefit of the press, been left without intelligence on the subject so long. The more remarkable deficiencies of the existing provisions were well pointed out some years ago, in a valuable little tract by Mr. Parkinson of Hoxton. But it is certain that the evils left without a remedy by the law had not till now been pressed upon the attention of the legislature with that publicity and force which, on certain subjects, appear to be necessary to put it in action. This being accomplished, we may reasonably hope that the proper consequences will ensue.

In one respect the information which the Committee have collected is a source of high and immediate satisfaction. In the greater part of the houses, or establishments, appropriated for the custody of the insane, the treatment which they have experienced is fully proved to have been better, and that really to a singular degree, than under the remarkable imperfection of the provisions for securing goodness of treatment, could, *a priori*, have been expected.

The most enormous, by far, of the instances of abuse and misconduct have been found, not in the private, but the public establishments, or hospitals for the insane.

On the state of the private houses, Mr. Wakefield, a gentleman whose active philanthropy has led him to a close inspection of most of the receptacles in England for the insane, appears, in the Committee's minutes of evidence, to have spoken as follows: “ In closing the account which I have given of houses of this sort, I beg to say, that the general feeling which I have upon the subject, is—that there is great merit due to many indi-

viduals, for the humanity which they exercise to the unfortunate persons under their care; and that I should be very much hurt, if any observation, which I made, in any place, should tend to injure the character or the business of a keeper of a madhouse."

With respect to all classes of patients, but with respect to the poorest in particular, a judgment can be formed of the conduct of the owner of the asylum, only upon a comparison of the accommodation which he affords with the pay which he receives. This material point, the authors of the questions put to the witnesses appear sometimes to have been in some danger of overlooking. If this error in any degree taints the legislative enactment; if it requires the keepers of houses for the insane to do more for the poor than what the pay allowed for them will afford, the effect will be, that these keepers must refuse to admit the poor, who, in that case, must either be allowed to wander dangerously and wretchedly about the country, or be consigned to the inhumane treatment which they have hitherto experienced in workhouses and in gaols.

On some questions, which seemed to imply a demand for more accommodations to the poorer class of patients than the money paid for them would allow, Dr. Powell, as Secretary to the Commissioners, observed; "When we are told a man has this sort of accommodation, we may say, and do say, it is bad, it is not the accommodation he ought to have: but when the keeper tells us, I am allowed but ten shillings a week for every thing I do for this man, we must be satisfied.—They have told us, they cannot afford to do more: and I have rather wondered they have done so much."—This is spoken generally; it is given as the average character of the houses visited by the Committee of the College of Physicians; and, most undoubtedly, it is high praise.

Dr. Latham, one of the Commissioners, or visiting physicians, says, "It always struck us, that there were more patients confined in a given space than there ought to be. And the observation which the keepers made in reply, is this, That really the sum which they receive is so very trifling, that they cannot afford better accommodation.—One may think the paupers rather more crowded than is right; but the sum paid for this accommodation is, in truth, so very trifling, that you cannot expect the same accommodation for the paupers as for those that pay better.—I consider that all the madhouses under the present regime are more calculated for places of confinement than places of cure."—To the question, "Are you of opinion, if more attention were paid to the cure of patients, that it might not in some instances succeed?" He answered, "My opinion is, it certainly would. In answering that question I am far from imputing blame to the keepers of the madhouses. I rather impute blame to the relatives of the

unfortunate people themselves; who shut them up there, in order that they may be out of the way. In nine cases out of ten, that is the fact; they get them away from their family into safe keeping. I have no hesitation in saying, that, in nine cases out of ten, there is very little attention paid on the part of their relations to those that are confined. And, if they were placed in proper situations, where their minds could be attended to, and where they could have a little more bodily exercise, they might more frequently be relieved."

This fact, of the little regard which is paid to the feelings of insane relatives, in the present state of the civilization and morality of our own country—a fact extending to so great a proportion as nine in ten, is worthy of the attention both of the statesman and the philosopher. A gentleman, who gave evidence before the Committee with much appearance of intelligence and humanity, Mr. Thomas Bakewell, the keeper of a house for the reception of insane persons at Spring Vale, in Staffordshire, confirms the existence of the fact by some striking particulars: "I am convinced that a lady of fashion and fortune withheld the means of cure from an elder sister, in consequence of expense; though that sister's own income was more than sufficient to procure the best means the country afforded. She is now kept at an obscure place, at a very small expense, and under very improper treatment, as I conceive.—I knew an instance of a person of very respectable family, who became insane soon after giving birth to a son. Such cases are generally supposed easy of recovery, as merely a temporary irritation. She was packed up into a back garret, where she was coarsely fed, and coarsely clothed, while the husband enjoyed every luxury that money could purchase, in the house below; till that son became of age and had her released. I know another family, who have kept a brother for seven years in confinement, without any means of recovery, for the sake, as I fully believe, of his property, though they are all in opulent circumstances. I have known an instance of a son very evidently taking measures to prevent the recovery of his father;—and have known several instances of people in opulence taking measures to prevent the recovery of their own brothers. I have seen evident proofs of vexation and disappointment in a wife, on the unexpected recovery of her husband; the same in a husband, on the unexpected recovery of his wife; and in a mother on the unexpected recovery of a son. I have now in the house a woman, who has been confined in a dark garret, without the comforts of a fire, for the best part of twenty years: her husband confessed to me that he had not seen her for many years: the servant told me, that nobody saw her

but herself; and she only to take her food, and take away the necessaries: the woman was perfectly inoffensive."

If the Committee had put questions to ascertain a fact, of which they seem not to have been aware; to ascertain, how very large a proportion of the patients in St. Luke's, a public charity, an asylum maintained by subscription, intended solely for the reception of people too poor to pay for themselves, and where all are alike treated as paupers, are not poor, but the relatives of persons in comparative affluence, they would have met with a most remarkable proof, at once, of the shameless disposition to prey upon every description of public property, which distinguishes our age and country, and of the gross insensibility which, on the slightest temptations, one set of relatives display to the feelings of another.

The tendency to good treatment of the helpless people under their care, which is found to distinguish generally the keepers of private madhouses, is secured by an important circumstance, which forms a characteristic difference between their situation, and that of the public institutions maintained by charity. The prosperity of keepers of private madhouses depends upon the satisfaction which they give; and the satisfaction which they give must in general be proportionate to the goodness of their conduct. They, in truth, are subject to the inspection of the public, upon a pretty extensive scale; for not only the relatives of the patients are incessantly visiting, some of whom are really and intensely interested in the welfare of the patients to whom they belong; but those of the patients themselves who are there for a season, and go away cured, are most efficient witnesses and reporters of the conduct which is pursued. In the case of the keepers of private madhouses, the public have all the benefit of competition, the effects of which are so remarkable, that whenever it is enabled fully and freely to operate, few evils arising from abuse exist. In the case of this class of the houses for the insane, the chief danger against which the act would have to provide, would be that of collusion between the keeper, and the relatives of the patients, when the intentions of those relatives happen not to be good. Now, in this case, the difficulty is not great; for the principal dangers of abuse appear to be two only—that persons may be confined who ought not to be; secondly, that they may be confined at an expense, at which comforts, or the more expensive means of cure cannot be afforded.

The case of the public and charitable asylums is essentially and strikingly different. The interests of the managers in these establishments have little, if any, dependence upon the goodness of their conduct; as their emoluments are not likely to be greater,

when their conduct is good, than when it is bad, when the persons under their care are comfortable, than when they are lamentably otherwise. One thing which they may be expected to do pretty universally is—to consult their own ease; even where they have not any grosser motives to misconduct. But this motive is in very many cases, and in this especially, capable of producing almost all the effects which result from the most wicked motives. It produces neglect with all its fatal consequences; and it is the great cause of cruelty, even in its most active and abominable shapes. As to neglect, in what manner that proceeds from the love of ease, it requires no illustration to make appear. But in what manner is it that cruelty to a madman is chiefly shown? Is it not in the severity of his confinement? in the chains and dungeons in which he is held? Now the temptation to unnecessary restraint, upon a man who, requiring to be looked after when he has a certain degree of liberty, needs no looking after where he is under a certain degree of confinement,—the unceasing, the powerful temptation to keep him under that degree of confinement is, *the love of ease*. To constancy of undue confinement add, what is also derived from the love of ease, constancy of neglect when under that confinement, and you have the source of almost all the atrocities, to which the management of madhouses is liable. Even to blows, when that enormity is committed, the keeper is more frequently provoked by some invasion of his ease, than by all other causes taken together.

To this motive, then, which appears—when the affair is seen to the bottom—to be the grand source of misconduct in madhouses, the interest of the owners, acting under the incitement of competition, affords in the case of the private houses a great and probably the best possible antidote. In the case of the great public institutions, this antidote is altogether wanting; and there is hardly any thing whatsoever to supply its place.

If we look to pecuniary corruption, which is the only other motive, of which in producing misconduct in madhouses the influence will be supposed to be great, no place is left for it in the case of private houses; the profits of which, competition is quite sure to reduce to their lowest possible terms;—or, which is the same thing in other words, it is quite competent to ensure to the patients the full amount of all the accommodations which the pay they bring with them can afford.—That, of public charities on the other hand, the constitution is but too apt to afford ample scope for pecuniary corruption, our countrymen have extensive experience. And in the charitable institutions for the reception of the insane, we shall not find this very feebly at work among

the causes of the misconduct which the labours of this Committee have happily brought to light.

Of the parts of their inquiry, that which to a far greater extent than any other has occupied the attention of the Committee, is the misconduct displayed in two of the great public charities for the benefit of the insane, the Lunatic Asylum at York, and Bethlem Hospital in London. We shall endeavour to give our readers some idea of the abuses which have there prevailed; and it is to be lamented, that the limits within which we are confined, allow it to be given very incompletely.

The Committee began their inquiries with the examination of Godfrey Higgins, Esq. a Governor of the York Asylum, and a Magistrate of the West Riding of Yorkshire. This gentleman had been instrumental in exciting a new degree of attention to the state of the York Lunatic Asylum; and obtained the appointment of a Committee of investigation. After this Committee had finished their inquiries, and made their report, Mr. Higgins visited the Asylum. The Committee ask him

“ In what condition did you find the Asylum when you visited it in the Spring Assize week of 1814?—Having suspicions in my mind that there were some parts of that Asylum which had not been seen, I went early in the morning, determined to examine every place. After ordering a great number of doors to be opened, I came to one which was in a retired situation in the kitchen apartments, and which was almost hid by the opening of a door in the passage; I ordered this door to be opened: the keepers hesitated, and said, the apartment belonged to the women, and they had not the key. I ordered them to get the key, but it was said to be mislaid, and not to be found at the moment. Upon this I grew angry, and told them, I insisted upon its being found, and that if they would not find it, I could find a key at the kitchen fire-side, namely, the poker: upon that the key was immediately brought. When the door was opened, I went into the passage, and I found four cells, I think, of about eight feet square, in a very horrid and filthy situation: the straw appeared to be almost saturated with urine and excrement; there was some bedding laid upon the straw in one cell, in the others only loose straw. A man (a keeper) was in the passage doing something, but what I do not know; the walls were daubed with excrement; the air holes, of which there was one in each cell, were partly filled with it; in one cell there were two pewter chamber-pots loose. I asked the keeper, if these cells were inhabited by the patients? and was told they were at night. I then desired him to take me up stairs, and show me the place of the women who came out of those cells that morning. I then went up stairs, and he showed me into a room, which I caused him to measure, and the size of which he told me was twelve feet by seven feet ten inches, and in which there were thirteen women, who he told me had all come out of those cells that morning.

"Were they pauper women?—I do not know; I was afraid that afterwards he should deny that, and therefore I went in and said to him, "Now, Sir, clap your hand upon the head of this woman," and I did so too; and I said, "Is this one of the very women that were in those cells last night," and he said she was. I became very sick, and could not remain longer in the room, I vomited. In the course of an hour and a half after this I procured Colonel Cooke of Owston, and John Cooke, Esquire, of Cams Mount, to examine those cells; they had come to attend a special meeting which I had caused to be called that day at twelve o'clock. Whilst I was standing at the door of the cells waiting for the key, a young woman ran past me, amongst the men servants, decently dressed; I asked who she was, and was told by Atkinson, that she was a female patient of respectable connections. At a special meeting of the governors which I had caused to be called, I told them what I had seen, and I asked Atkinson the apothecary, in their presence, if what I had said was not correctly true; and I told him, if he intended to deny any part of it, he must do it then; he bowed his assent, and acknowledged what I said was true. I then desired the governors to come with me to see those cells; and then I discovered, for the first time, that the cells were unknown to the governors: several of the Committee, which consisted of fifteen, told me they had never seen them; that they had gone round the house with his Grace the Archbishop of York; that they had understood they were to see the whole house, and these cells had not been shown to them. We went through the cells, and at that time they had been cleaned as much as they could in so short a space of time. I turned up the straw in one of them with my umbrella, and pointed out to the gentlemen the chain and handcuff which were then concealed beneath the straw, and which I then perceived had been fixed into a board newly put down in the floor. I afterwards inquired of one of the committee of five, who had been appointed to afford any temporary accommodations which they could for a moderate sum of money to the patients, if those cells had been shown to that Committee, and I was told they had not. Before I saw these cells I had been repeatedly told by Atkinson the apothecary, and the keepers, that I had seen the whole house that was occupied by patients. I afterwards was told by a professional man, Mr. Pritchett, that he had heard Mr. Watson the architect ask one of the keepers what those places were: Mr. Watson at that time was looking out of the staircase window, and he heard the keeper answer Mr. Watson, that they were cellars and other little offices. The day after my examination of these cells, I went again early in the morning to examine them, after I knew that the straw could have been used only one night; and I can positively say, from this examination, that the straw which I first found there, must have been in use a very considerable time. Early in the investigation which took place into this Institution, several gentlemen came forward to state, that they had examined the house on purpose to form a judgment of it, but though several of them were present when I stated the case of these cells, they did not state that they had seen them. When Colonel Cooke of Owston was in one of the cells, he tried to make marks or letters in the excrement remain-

ing upon the floor after it had been cleaned, and fresh straw put into it, which he did without any difficulty, and which he will be ready to state to the Committee if required. The day after I saw these cells, I went up into the apartments of the upper class of female patients, with one of the men-keepers as I should suppose, about thirty years of age, one of those who were dismissed in August; and I asked him, when at the door of the ward, if his key would not open those doors; I did not give him time to answer, but I seized the key from his hand, and with it opened the outer door of the ward, and then went and opened the bed-room doors of the upper class of female patients, and locked them again; I then gave him his key again; Mr. Samuel Tuke, a Quaker, of York, was standing by and saw me.

“ Do you know of any unfit practices with respect to the female patients?—Yes; I have been informed they have been got with child; and I have now in my hand a copy of a warrant granted by Frederick L’Oste of the county of Lincoln, to apprehend James Backhouse the head keeper, who was charged with having got with child Elizabeth West a female pauper, sent to this Asylum by the overseers of the poor of the Township of Louth; the warrant appears to have been backed on the 17th of June 1797, by R. Metcalfe. I am informed that he was taken by the authority of this warrant to Louth, where Elizabeth West fathered the child upon him. Elizabeth West was admitted into the Asylum August the 17th 1796, was removed May the 8th 1797, and was delivered of a male child August the 19th 1797; the keeper Backhouse paid 30*l.* to the overseers of the poor of the parish of Louth, for the maintenance of the bastard; he paid it by three instalments; it appears by the town books, that the overseers of the poor have made themselves debtors in these sums to the township: I am informed that Elizabeth West was a young woman of exceedingly good character before she went to the Asylum; and she is now a woman of exceedingly good character, and has been living some years in a respectable family. Some time after this the head keeper retired from this house; upon which occasion a piece of plate was voted to him as a mark of approbation of his conduct during a service of twenty-six years. I have not the most distant suspicion, that any one of the governors who voted for this piece of plate had any knowledge whatever of this transaction between Backhouse and West, except the physician Hunter.

“ In what line of life is Backhouse at present?—He now keeps a private madhouse in York.

“ Do you know of any case more recent, of the same nature?—Yes; the case of Dorothy Exilby of Kirby Malzeard; she was admitted February 8th 1801, she was discharged cured February 20th 1802, delivered of a male child the 21st of September 1802; the father of this child is said to have been one of the patients. I have heard also, and believe from the respectable authority from which I received it, that a woman in a superior situation in life, who was there as an insane patient, was got with child by some person within the house.”

(Report, p. 1—3.)

The circumstance which first called the peculiar attention of

Mr. Higgins to the state of the York Asylum, was described to the public by himself at the time, and this statement we insert as containing more circumstances in fewer words, than the spoken account which he delivered to the Committee.

“ A few days previous to the 17th of April 1813, complaint was made to me by an old woman, that William Vicars, of Fishlake, had assaulted her, &c. in consequence of which I granted a warrant to apprehend him, and upon his being brought up, I found he was insane. He being a pauper, I ordered the overseer of the poor, Thomas Leach, to take proper measures for conveying him to the Asylum at York, to which place he was taken on the 17th of last April; and from which he was brought away on the 13th of last October. When I saw Vicars before he went, he appeared in good bodily health, no ways weak or emaciated.

“ About a fortnight ago, application was made to me by Sarah the wife of William Vicars, for an order for more relief from the overseer of the poor. I summoned him to the Town Hall, in Doncaster, and upon inquiring into Vicars’s situation, the following documents marked A B C D E, were sworn to be true by Sarah Vicars, and the overseer, Thomas Leach, in the presence of W. Wrightson, Esq. and myself:—

“ A. Inventory of what clothes William Vicars took into the Asylum, and also of what he brought back with him.

“ He took with him a good and nearly new blue coat, a new scarlet silk shag waistcoat, a pair of good velveteen breeches, a new down hat, cost 15s. two pair of blue stockings, never been mended, a pair of new shoes, two new blue and white striped shirts, a short velveteen jacket, another scarlet waistcoat, spotted with black, another pair of velveteen breeches, two neckerchiefs, one of silk, and one of cotton, two pocket-handkerchiefs, and two night-caps.

“ He brought back with him, one short jacket and one waistcoat, two white shirts, two pair of stockings, an old hat, not the hat he took, and a pair of bad shoes: he has not brought back one article he took with him. *He has brought back the itch with him.*

SARAH  
Her            Mark.  
VICKERS.

*Bill paid by the Overseer.*

York, July 5th, 1813.

B.      W. VICARS,

Bought of JOHN HODGSON,

	£. s. d.
4½ yds dark cloth, 3s. 9d. ....	0 16 11
2½ yds stout cord, 3s. 9d. ....	0 9 5
4½ yds ditto cotton, 1s. 2d. ....	0 5 3
Pocketing for 3 coats. ....	0 1 10
3½ dozen buttons, 8d. ....	0 2 4
	<hr/>
	£ 1 15 9
	<hr/>

*Bill paid by the Overseer.*

C.

MR. VICARS.

	£.	s.	d.
Shirts mended .....	0	1	6
7½ yds cloth .....	0	13	9
2 shirts made .....	0	2	9
2 pair stockings .....	0	6	0
	£	1	4 0

*Bill paid by the Overseer.*

D.

The Overseers of Fishlake, Dr.

To the Governors of the York Lunatic Asylum,

OCTOBER 13th, 1813.

	£.	s.	d.
Board, &c. of Wm. Vickers, 4 weeks 3 days, 9s.....	1	19	9
Letter 1s. 9d. Shaving 5d. Stamp, 2d. ....	0	2	4
Paid short.....	0	0	6
Received, George Surr,	2	2	7
Allowing deposit	1	1	0
	£	1	1 7

E. This is to certify that I was sent for, by Mr. Hopwood, of Thorning Hirst, on Thursday the 14th instant, to examine the state in which William Vicars, of Stainforth, was dismissed from the York Asylum. He had the itch very bad, was also extremely filthy, for I saw his wife not only comb several lice from his head, but take them from the folds of his shirt neck; his health was so much impaired, that he was not able to stand by himself; his legs were very much swelled, and one of them in a state of mortification. He is now much recovered, both in mind and health, by bark and a generous nourishing diet. Witness my hand this 29th day of October, 1813.

CHARLES MAPLES, *Surgeon.*"

(Appendix to History, p. 6—8.)

We cannot afford to proceed with any more of the evidence of Mr. Higgins. The two specimens of abuse which we have selected, are, it is to be remembered, extreme cases. But the general state of the house is represented to be just such a state as one would expect to give birth to such instances, and altogether conformable with them.

The following testimony, as far as it goes, confirms the statement presented by Mr. Higgins.

Bryan Cooke, Esquire, called in, and Examined.

YOU are a Magistrate of the West Riding of the County of York?  
—I am.

“ Did you in March 1814, visit certain cells pointed out to you by Mr. Higgins, in the Lunatic Asylum at York?—I did.

“ In what state did you find them?—I found them newly cleaned out, the stench was abominable; I turned over the new straw which had been put upon the floor, and the boards were wet; and I pressed my stick upon the floor to see whether it was impregnated with the moisture, and I could have marked any letter upon it in the remains of the filth. I should say it was hardly possible it could have been cleaned out for a considerable time; the floor was completely saturated with filth.

“ Do you know any other particulars of the state of the Asylum at York?—*The general state of the Asylum was filthy in the extreme.*

“ Have you read the statement made by Mr. Higgins, of the part which you took along with him, in the examination of the Lunatic Asylum?—I have.

“ Are the statements there made, by Mr. Higgins, of your interference in the business, correct?—Perfectly so; I think it was in or about March 1814 there was a meeting at which I attended, and I was desired by one of the governors to go into one of the day-rooms; he said he had a person there that had formerly worked for him, and he wished to see him. I, together with a governor and Colonel John Cooke of Camps Mount, went into a day-room; there were about twelve men patients in it; upon opening the door my feelings were so offended, that I could hardly proceed from the stench; I retreated into the passage and was very near vomiting; Colonel John Cooke, who was with me, staid about two minutes longer in the day-room, and he assured me that he felt the nausea the whole day afterwards.”

(Report, p. 9, 10.)

To these we must add another testimony, which has the great advantage of plenitude of detail, we mean the testimony of Mr. Jonathan Gray, of York, who in 1815 addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, and published with his name, a History of the York Lunatic Asylum. We consider this account, therefore, as the testimony of Mr. Gray, delivered, not before the Committee of the House of Commons, but a much more august tribunal, the British Nation, including both Houses of Parliament with all their Committees. We recommend it to a peculiar degree of attention; not only as it corroborates, which it does in a very extraordinary manner, the existence of the abuses to which Mr. Higgins and others gave testimony; but because it accounts for them, by producing the causes; and most usefully elucidates the sort of train into which the affairs of public charities are apt to fall, where somebody, either alone, or with others, finds there the means of opening to himself a channel of emolument; eases other people of trouble, by taking it upon himself; and making them a screen as exercising an inspection which they cease to perform, manages just as he pleases; that is, just as his ease and emoluments prescribe.

We shall endeavour, as far as it is possible, in a few words to exhibit a specimen of the sort of facts which it is the object of the publication to bring to light.

The York Lunatic Asylum originated in the commiseration felt by certain individuals in 1772, with the Archbishop at their head, "for the deplorable situation of many poor lunatics in that extensive county, having no other support but what a needy parent could bestow, or a thrifty parish officer provide." A subscription was raised to erect a building for the accommodation of such lunatics as were "either parish poor, or belonging to distressed or indigent families." Such was the primary intention of this charitable institution; and such was the purpose for the accomplishment of which the original subscribers contributed their money. It was also declared in the advertisements, by which subscriptions were solicited, that whatever surplus, after the expence of building, should happily exist, should be placed out at interest, "and the produce applied towards the relief of parishes, and private persons in indigent circumstances sending patients."

All the money subscribed was expended in buildings. In the year 1778 Lady Gower, and other ladies,—that the original object of the institution, the relief of persons unable to pay, might not be frustrated,—made liberal donations, under express condition that the money should be applied "for the relief of patients only." This money was vested in the public funds, under the title of the *reduction-fund*, and the interest employed to reduce the payments of poor persons not receiving parochial relief."

The sum was small; and as indigent relatives were unable, and parishes commonly unwilling to afford the expense of maintenance in the Asylum, the number of patients continued to be small. This, in 1784, led to an important innovation;—to admit a proportion of more opulent patients, by whose higher payments "the means might be created of relieving the necessitous."

A Committee was formed to fix the rates, of whom the physician, Dr. Hunter, was one. Hitherto, he had given to the charity his attendance gratis. It was agreed that he should take fees from the new or opulent class of patients.

Dr. Hunter had only enjoyed this privilege about two years, when he recommended it to the governors to give the physician a salary of 200*l.* per annum, in lieu of this species of remuneration. Some of the reasons by which he supported this recommendation are highly worthy of attention. "This salary," he observed, "will attach him to the Asylum; and prevent his establishing a private house of confinement, which would evidently counteract the design of the original foundation of the Asylum."

We mean hereafter to request the particular attention of the reader to the evils which spring from allowing the principal officers of public madhouses to have private madhouses of their own. At present what is worthy of notice is, the strength of the declaration of Dr. Hunter, and the extent which he ascribes to the ruinous consequences of so unhappy a conjunction.

Another reason which the Doctor adduced was expressed in the following words: "Taking fees, at the discretion of the attending physician, may, at a future period, be attended with bad consequences."

Notwithstanding this recommendation, the old practice was confirmed, after a short trial of the new; and the Doctor was left to draw his own emoluments out of the patients.

One immediate consequence of this regulation is obvious,—that the physician had now a strong motive to fill the house, if possible, with opulent patients, to the exclusion of the poor, and of course the frustration of the original intention of the charity. The question is, if he had any check to prevent him.

At first, as we have seen, a Committee was appointed for managing the admission of the opulent patients. "After three or four years," says Mr. Gray, "we cease to hear of any Committee." The easiest mode for the Committee was, to let the Doctor, who best understood the business, manage it for them.

"To what number," says the History, "the opulent class was originally restricted does not appear—it certainly was limited, *but a blot of ink has obliterated the word in the Order-Book.*"

When Mr. Gray quotes the words of the original advertisements, which declare the relief of the poor to be the object of the institution, he adds, "This is a quotation, verbatim, from the Order-Book; *but such pains have been taken to obliterate it*, that there was great difficulty in decyphering the passage."

When patients were first admitted in the Asylum at York, the following rule was established: "No keeper or hired servant of the Asylum to accept any money, or other gratuity, for his or her own use, on the behalf of any patient, on any account whatever." On the importance of this regulation we mean hereafter to lay the greatest stress; and earnestly to recommend it to the attention of those members of the legislature who may be chiefly instrumental in framing the provisions of a new enactment.

After the rule for the admission of opulent patients, "this salutary regulation," says our History, "was presently repealed. It had been ordered that a board should be put up in the hall, to prohibit any money being given. But on the 7th of July 1785, it was resolved that this order, and the proceedings thereon, had been rescinded."

In the year 1788 the Rev. Mr. Mason, the celebrated poet, and Precentor of York, together with Dr. Burgh and others, were of opinion, that the absorption of all the powers of government relating to the institution, in the hands of the physician, had already led to abuse; that it "had converted a public charity into an hotel for the reception of persons of condition only;" that the sum applied to the relief of the poor from the pay of the affluent bore no proportion to its actual amount; and that the Doctor must appropriate the surplus to his own use. Mr. Mason gave his thoughts to the public, under the title of "*Animadversions on the present Government of the York Lunatic Asylum.*"

What was the consequence of the charges? Was public inquiry instituted; and were they by public scrutiny shown to be false? A very different course was pursued. "*The Doctor,*" says our History, "had the address to persuade the governors that these objections arose not from pure or charitable motives, but from personal hostility." The Governors accordingly settled all complaints by voting that the Doctor's conduct was most meritorious.

In the face of his letter, in which were declared the mischievous consequences to the Asylum if its physician should open a private house of confinement, the Doctor advertised in the newspapers, in 1790, a "*house of retirement for persons of condition only;*" without any farther opposition on the part of the Governors, than a proposal by Mr. Mason, that the assertion which still continued to be made in the quarterly advertisements, in the following words: viz. "*that this institution is intended to lessen the number of private madhouses,*" should in future be omitted. But the motion was negatived.

Mr. Mason and his friends persevered in their endeavours to introduce some reform into the government of the charity, till 1794. They were baffled, however, in all their attempts; and the year 1794, says our History, "is the latest period in which we hear of any opposition to the plans of Dr. Hunter. It is also the latest period in which we hear of visitors. From 1782 to 1794 visitors have been occasionally appointed. *Dr. Hunter, however, being usually one.* From the period that the Governors of the Asylum ceased to be watched, the very name of visitation appears to have been unheard of."

"In 1798," says the History, "Dr. Hunter was induced to wish for an assistant in the superintendance of the Asylum, and of his *various* private plans of confinement for lunatics."—In this, one thing only is very remarkable, viz. the pretensions of the Doctor. To obviate "*any inconvenience which might arise*

from his death or retirement," he thought it desirable to communicate his knowledge to some medical gentleman. Dr. Best was chosen as the favoured pupil, and introduced into the Asylum, with the approbation of the Governors. In a letter addressed on this occasion to the apothecary of the Asylum, and inserted by direction of the Governors in the order-book, the Doctor says, "To Dr. Best I mean to communicate all the knowledge I have gained from the experience of twenty-five years. And farther, to assist his studies *in this obscure branch of medicine*, I mean freely to disclose to him the manner of preparing the different medicines, so successfully made use of at the Asylum, and of which the composition is unknown to every person but myself."

The author of the history treats this as arrant quackery. And we do agree with him that the doctrine of a nostrum, and a secret, delivered in this manner, has all the appearance of quackery. There is but one alternative; it was either quackery, or the very delirium of ignorance and self-conceit. In the first place, as fewer cures were performed in the Asylum than almost any where else, the Doctor's practice had, according to that evidence, nothing to recommend it. In the next place, lunacy, instead of being *an obscure part of medicine*, is, more properly speaking, no part of medicine at all. As to his drugs, "of which the composition was unknown to every person but himself," it is found by the most ample experience, that the bodily health of the insane is to be treated on very nearly the same principles as that of other people; and as to the mental disease, that drugging it is of very little service.

Things proceeding in the established train, we pass the intermediate circumstances till the death of Dr. Hunter, and the appointment of Dr. Best as sole physician, in 1809. This undoubtedly was the time to introduce reforms, if tenderness to Dr. Hunter had made the Governors averse to withdraw from him any of the powers with which he had been entrusted. Was it used for this purpose? Very far from it. The Asylum was delivered over, or rather abandoned to Dr. Best, in as naked and defenceless a condition as it was held by his predecessor. After a time, an effort seems to have been made to render things worse. In 1813 a rule was adopted, on the proposition of Dr. Best, "that no person should be allowed to visit any of the patients, without a special written order of admission signed by the physician." This was to put it in the power of the physician to exclude, still more effectually, any ray of light which might display to the public the interior of the Asylum. It went to exclude even the Governors of the Asylum, without the express permission of the Doctor. This, however, was afterwards

thought rather too much; and the wording of the rule was so altered, as to let in the Governors.

“Dr. Best,” says the History, “had now obtained an absolute dominion. Every thing was under his controul. Official visitation had ceased; and all intrusive observation was shut out. The Governors had confidence in the physician; and, except Governors, no persons could enter the Asylum without his permission. No guards were placed against abuses; and every avenue to reform seemed now closed.”

In 1813, Mr. Samuel Tuke published his “Description of the Retreat;” the celebrated work, the title of which we have placed among others at the head of this article. This Institution originated in a refusal, in 1791, to permit the friends of a female Quaker to visit her in the Asylum. It was said that she was not fit to be seen; and shortly after, a statement was made of her death. This circumstance suggested to the Quakers about York the propriety of forming an establishment for persons of their own persuasion; and a house was built to which they gave the name of the “Retreat.” This Institution has been conducted, from the beginning, upon the principle, that the utmost practicable degree of gentleness, tenderness, and attention to the comforts and feelings of the patients, was, in the first place, due to them as human beings; and, in the next place, was infinitely the most promising means of effecting their recovery. The object of the work of Mr. Tuke was to describe the system of management which had been pursued in the Retreat; to make known the success which had attended it; and to point out, more distinctly than had ever yet been done, the principle upon which that management was founded (the principle of gentleness, and of regard to the feelings of the patients), as the grand principle which ought to regulate the management of every establishment of the kind. The service which Mr. Tuke proposed to render to the public by his book was assuredly of importance, and his book has performed it well. We do not say that the management at the Retreat, though in the present state of the practice among the best, cannot be surpassed,—that it has not been equalled, and often approached, in private houses. But this we do say, that no writer before Mr. Tuke had pointed out the principle of gentleness and attention to comforts as the governing principle in the management of the insane; and that he, in having pointed this out as the governing principle, has rendered a service to humanity of the greatest importance. It is this characteristic circumstance which will render the publication of his book an era in the history of the treatment of this calamity. The book has already met with great, and almost universal attention. It has, by the nation, been much more than

approved, it has been applauded, and admired. One thing we may venture to say, that it was hardly possible for a book to be written in a manner less calculated to give offence to any body. There was little criticism passed upon other institutions; and besides stating the facts which had taken place in the Retreat, little more was done than to hold up to view the importance of the great principle which it was the object of the book to recommend.

Yet this book, such as it is, gave prodigious offence. It has been regarded as a libel upon the Asylum, and an attack upon it has appeared in the newspapers. The letter, as it is given in a Note to Mr. Gray's History, is not only a curiosity, but so instructive, that we cannot forbear inserting it here.

“ TO THE EDITOR OF THE YORK HERALD.

Sir,

When a vessel or a fort becomes the subject of attack, it matters not whether hostilities be carried on by storming, boarding, grape or shells, or by sapping, mining, catamaran, or torpedo. The intended effect is the same, and the same necessity exists for active defence. In like manner, when an attempt is made to injure the reputation and interests of any public body, or private individual, it is of little moment to the assailed party whether the measure be accomplished by open libel, or masked insinuation. If no means of defence are employed, the mischief may be equal from either method, and it is, therefore, equally incumbent on the object of either species of attack to notice and repel it.

The following brief statement will illustrate these remarks:—

In an account of the Quakers' Retreat for Lunatics near York, published a short time ago, some highly indecorous and injurious insinuations were thrown out against other establishments for the same purpose, the intended application of which no one could misunderstand, and which were as strikingly illiberal, as they were grossly unfounded. To this attack it was not thought necessary to reply; but a printed hand-bill having been recently received, which informs its readers in terms characteristic of similar productions, that the physician to the Quakers' Retreat has formed an establishment for the reception of persons afflicted with insanity, “with a view to *introduce*, on a small scale, the *mild methods of treatment in use at that Institution*,” it would be an act of culpable supineness to allow it to pass by without some degree of notice. It must be obvious to every one, that the words of this advertisement (which may be considered in the light of a *torpedo*) were intended to impose a belief on its readers, that methods of treatment of an *opposite* description were employed at the other establishments for insane persons in York and its vicinity; an insinuation in itself as disingenuous, and as totally destitute of foundation, as the *manner* of making it is perfectly unprofessional, and palpably incorrect.

The object of this letter being merely to expose these proceedings, from a sense of duty to others, and of justice to the Writer's self, all feelings of personal animosity are utterly disclaimed; at the same time, should any one be desirous of ascertaining your Correspondent's name, which it is not thought necessary to obtrude upon the public, it may be easily known by inquiry at your office.

I am, Sir, &c.

EVIGILATOR."

YORK, Sept. 23, 1813.

Though this letter, as the reader perceives, affords no little matter for criticism, we shall remark upon nothing but the spirit of it. The circumstance which most peculiarly and eminently deserves the reader's attention is—the frank declaration, that to recommend gentleness in the management of insane patients was to libel the York Asylum; “to throw out injurious insinuations, which no one could misunderstand.” It is indeed asserted that such insinuations were undeserved; but this assertion its author himself contradicts. If the treatment in the Asylum was mild, why was the Doctor afraid of a book which recommended mildness? If it was mild, the public either knew it, or it did not know it. If it knew it, to recommend mildness was to recommend the Asylum. If it did not know it, why did not Dr. Best, instead of attacking Mr. Tuke's book, himself write a similar one, describing the mild practices of the Asylum, and inviting the public, like Mr. Tuke, to verify his account by inspection?—We particularly beg the reader's attention to a general rule, of which this is only a particular verification;—that every thing bad, in any kind of institution, always looks upon itself as libelled by the description of the opposite good; and they who profit by that which is bad always complain of being injured by those who try to make known that which is good.

In the same year, 1813, happened the case of Vicars, of which the publication by Mr. Higgins gave energy to the attention which the public, it seems, were beginning to bestow upon the management of the Asylum. The Governors met in their Quarterly Court: an inquiry could not be avoided: and how was it performed?—The servants of the house, the persons accused, were brought in, and asked if they were guilty. They all denied it. Upon this, the point was clear; no guilt existed. And an advertisement was published in the newspapers, affirming that while “the said William Vicars remained in the Asylum he was treated with all possible care, attention, and humanity.” Mr. Gray expressly affirms, that, besides the servants, no evidence whatever was called for, nor was any minute committed to writing of what they deposed.

“The publication,” says our History, “of the resolutions

upon the case of Vicars, was evidently intended to quiet the public mind, and to white-wash the Institution—the effect produced, however, was directly the reverse.” Some energetic individuals interfered, and insisted upon the formation of a Committee of investigation. The motion was violently opposed; but being supported by the Archbishop, was finally carried.

It was proposed that a general inquiry into the rules and management should be instituted by this Committee; but this, for the time, was over-ruled, and its labours were restricted to an investigation of the individual cases of abuse which Mr. Higgins had adduced. For the circumstances of these, the evidence taken, and the decisions pronounced, we must reluctantly content ourselves with a reference to the Appendix of the History, which the curious reader will find it worth his while to consult.

One incident is too important to be omitted. In a note, which the author subjoins to the report of the first of the cases, he says that when two of the servants of the house, who had been examined, were about to give their oath (the mode of examination was, first to question the witnesses, and, after their evidence was given, to ask them to confirm it by oath), “the Archbishop of York observed, that if it was intended to administer an oath to them, he must leave the room; as he was convinced, both from the manner of those witnesses, and the improbability of their statement, that they were asserting what was untrue. It was then proposed, and agreed, that the administration of an oath should in future be wholly discontinued.”

On the 28th of December, 1813, the Asylum was discovered to be on fire; and one wing of the house was burnt down. The following account of that event is given in Mr. Higgins’s evidence before the House of Commons Committee:

“ How long is it since the Asylum was burnt?—A few days after the court of governors at York had ordered a general investigation, by a committee, into the rules and management of the Institution (which was about last January twelvemonth), the building was found to be on fire.

“ Did any investigation take place how it came to be on fire?—Yes; a general meeting took place immediately on the spur of the occasion, and a committee of five gentlemen was appointed; and they made a report a few weeks afterwards, that they believed four patients had been burnt.

“ Do you believe more than four people were burnt?—I can hardly state a decisive opinion upon that subject; only it appears by the report of the committee, that several patients had been admitted into the house, of whom no account whatever can be given.

“ You mean by that, that they are not now existing in the house, and

they can produce no proof of their being discharged?—Yes; viz. Margaret Smith, admitted February 17th 1787; Catherine St. Clair, admitted October 16th 1790; D. Myson, admitted April 20th 1796; D. Thackwray, admitted July 20th 1796; and Mrs. Parke, admitted August 19th 1797.

At what time of the day or night did the fire break out?—At about eight o'clock in the evening.” (Report, p. 6.)

The formation of a new Committee, to inquire into rules and management, was at last obtained. The following curious fact appeared :

“ For the purpose of drawing out an average of the number of patients of each class, Mr. Surr, the steward, was desired to send to the house of a member of the Committee, his account books for the *four quarters of the year 1813*. Four quarterly books were in consequence sent, but in selecting these, Mr. Surr had unintentionally occasioned a remarkable discovery. *Three* of the books sent were the steward’s accounts with the Governors for the 2d, 3d, and 4th quarters of the year—the *fourth* book—sent instead of that for the *first* quarter, proved to be *another account* for the *second* quarter of the year. There was, therefore, no account for the *first*, but *two* accounts for the *second* quarter, both professing to contain the weekly payments of the patients. Upon a comparison of the two books for the same quarter, it was found, that in the book which appeared to have been sent by mistake, Mr. Surr had entered one set of patients at 15s.—another set at 12s.—and a third set at 10s. per week. In the *other* book, the *very same patients* were entered as follows:—Those who paid 15s. were set down as paying *eleven shillings*; those who paid 12s. as paying *ten shillings*; those who paid 10s. as paying *nine shillings*. *In Mr. Surr’s accounts with the Governors he only gave credit for the smaller sum*—the book sent by mistake, therefore, did not tally with the steward’s accounts with the Governors—on the contrary, it proved, that a portion of the payments from three classes of the patients, amounting to no less a sum than 65*l.* 13*s.* for a quarter, or 262*l.* 12*s.* per ann. had never been brought to account. On inquiry, it appeared, that this sum was paid over by the Steward to the Physician.” (History, p. 45.)

The annual receipts of the physician, paying himself in this manner, are thus stated by the author of the History :

Sixteen patients at a guinea and a half per week, deducting fourteen shillings paid over to the charity—leaves	£. s. d.
	728 0 0
The payments to the physician from the three middle classes amount to.....	262 12 0
Fees on admission.....	30 0 0
	—————
Per annum	£1020 12 0
	—————

(History, p. 51.)

We can advert to but a few of the curious particulars which the inquiries of the Committee brought to light.—An advertisement was annually published in the newspapers, under the direction of the apothecary, in which the number of admissions, cures, deaths, &c. was inserted. In this the number of deaths was habitually falsified, a portion being taken away from the amount of the deaths, and added to that of the cures. “I asked the apothecary,” says Mr. Higgins, “who made out these accounts; and he told me that he did; but that it was his practice to send them to the physician and to the steward for examination previous to their publication.”

In consequence of the inquiry, visitors, after a lapse of twenty-eight years, were appointed. They discovered the existence of an old rule, that the steward should not send bills of charges to the friends of the patients, till signed by the visitors. When the obedience of the old steward to this rule was demanded, he plainly told the visitors he would not pay it obedience. It impeached his honour.

At a meeting of Governors, which was held to consider some new rules which were proposed by the Committee of inquiry, Earl Fitzwilliam expressed great surprise at learning from that Committee’s report, that the highest sum paid to the institution by any patient was only fourteen shillings per week, when it was known there were in the Asylum persons who paid much more. “These,” says our History, “it was answered, were Dr. Best’s private patients, for whom he received what he thought fit; and paid the house only fourteen shillings. Earl Fitzwilliam declared his astonishment. He had been a governor for a long period of years, and regularly attended the annual meetings; but he never before heard of any private patients of the physician.”

The following is a fact of too much importance not to be produced:

“The most extraordinary circumstance reported by the Committee, as connected with the old system, was the conduct of Mr. Surr, the late steward. The Committee being in want of his quarterly books of account as to the patients, on the Monday before the Quarterly Court, Mr. Pyemont, the new steward, was dispatched to apply to Mr. Surr for these books—he returned twice without them—Mr. Surr did not know what books the Committee wanted. The Committee waited on him in person. He peremptorily refused to deliver them up, or to give any account of them. The Committee, therefore, reported to the Quarterly Court, that they conceived these books to be the property of the Institution, and submitted that Mr. Surr should be required to deliver them up. In consequence of this report of the Committee, Mr. Brook, the treasurer, was deputed by the Quarterly Court to demand the books—he returned with an answer, that Mr. Surr, after the Com-

mittee left him on Monday night, had, *in a moment of irritation*, BURNED THE WHOLE OF THE BOOKS—except the book for the quarter just expiring.

“ The following resolution was then passed :

“ ‘ That the conduct of Mr. Surr, in withholding from the Committee several account books belonging to this Institution, and destroying them, deserves the severest reprehension of this Court, and is a most ungrateful return for the indulgence shown him by the last Annual Court, in allowing him to reside in the steward’s house until the 6th of April next.’

“ A no less extraordinary circumstance occurred at the next meeting of the Committee, sufficiently proving that if the burning of the books really took place, it was not a sally of passion but a deliberate act of selection. Mr. Surr produced to the Committee those quarterly books which tally with his accounts, and are so contrived, that whilst the physician was receiving considerable sums out of the weekly payments of the patients, he does not appear to receive a single shilling—the other set of books, which would have disclosed the steward’s actual receipts, he still declared he had destroyed.” (History, p. 89, 90.)

Mr. Gray sums up his account of the York Lunatic Asylum in the following words :

“ In the Asylum Investigations, CONCEALMENT appears at every step of our progress: 365 patients have died—the number is advertised 221. A patient disappears, and is never more heard of,—he is said to be ‘ REMOVED.’ A patient is *killed*—his body is hurried away to prevent an inquest. He is *cured*, but it is by some medicine, the composition of which is known only to the Doctor. The public cry out, that a patient has been neglected; there is a *levy en masse* of respectable Governors to quell the disturbance, and to certify that the patient has been treated ‘ with *all possible care, attention, and humanity.*’ A Committee of Investigation desires to be shown the house; certain cells ‘ in an extreme state of filth and neglect’ are omitted to be pointed out to them. The Governors examine the accounts; there are considerable sums, of which neither the receipt nor the application appears. They inspect the Physician’s Report;—it only aids the concealment. The steward’s books are inquired for;—in a moment of irritation he selects for the flames such of them as he thought it not adviseable to produce. And yet every circumstance of concealment is imputed by some to mere accident; and every attempt to tear off the mask, and exhibit the Asylum in its true character, is stigmatized as a libel, or an indelicate disclosure!” (History, p. 90, 91.)

The effect of the inquiries was, that all the servants and officers of the house were dismissed, except the Doctor. He alone was retained. This was celebrated, in his behalf, as a complete victory, and triumph was performed. The public were congratulated in the newspapers on the result of the inquiry, by which it had appeared, that “ the conduct of the physician had been peculiarly correct.” In cool and impartial judgment, however, it

must appear that the Doctor was condemned in the condemnation of the servants, who were made the scape-goats to carry the sins of the establishment into the wilderness. If the conduct of the servants and other officers had been allowed to be habitually bad, the doctor alone was to blame, who possessed consigned to him all the powers of government in the Institution, and was, therefore, justly responsible for every thing which occurred. Mr. Higgins, in giving his evidence before the House of Commons Committee, having been asked, was there any committee or visitors who looked after the affairs of the asylum, answered—"No; the physician had for many years past been the sole physician, sole visitor, and sole committee, and had the whole management of the Institution." And this testimony is confirmed, if such confirmation were necessary, by the evidence of Dr. Best himself. But further, the condemnation of all the servants and officers, except Dr. Best, was not only the condemnation of Dr. Best, but the condemnation of the Institution; because, whatsoever was the conduct of the servants and officers of such a place, such exactly was the management. The conduct of these persons was declared to be eminently bad: by the same act the state of the house was declared to have been eminently bad, since the state of the house was created by their conduct. They were necessary causes and effects, and the one was the measure of the other. If the state of the house was good, the conduct of the managers within it could not be bad; if their conduct was bad, the state of the house must exactly correspond with it.

Dr. Best, however, requested to appear before the Committee of the House of Commons to give evidence in his own vindication. It appears, that he attempted to deny scarcely any of the facts which had been stated. What he chiefly endeavoured to do was to explain them, and show that no criminality attached to them. For example, he did not deny that the rooms which Mr. Higgins discovered were in the state which Mr. Higgins described. But he said they were in that state, only because the patients were more than usually crowded, by the loss of the wing of the building which had been destroyed by fire. He did not deny that William Vicars was carried home in the miserable condition described by Mr. Higgins. He only said, that he had suffered an apoplectic attack while in the house, had fallen into bad health, lost the command over the natural discharges, could with great difficulty be kept clean, and was removed when convalescence had just begun. He did not deny that the statement of deaths made by the apothecary in the newspapers was false; but he denied that he knew of their falsehood, and denied also that the apothecary had any interest in falsifying. He also did not deny that two sets of books were kept; and that the set which showed what

the patients really paid was burnt. He only denied that any fraud or concealment was meant, as he himself had explained the modes of payment to the Committee, who also saw both sets of books. As these are the few important facts which we have been able to mention, these are the only answers which we can afford to insert.

With respect to his plea, from the burning of the wing, this fact is stated, that an offer was made, by the persons who had the government of the Retreat, as well as of the Asylum at Nottingham, to accommodate, in that exigency, as many of the patients as possible; and that Dr. Best induced the Governors of the York Asylum to decline the offer in both instances. The reply which is made by the Doctor is, that the numbers which they could accommodate were so very small, that it would have made no considerable difference in the state of the Asylum to have sent them.

We regret the space which the statement of these particulars has required; but to ourselves they appear to be highly instructive, and we could not have made the case intelligible without them. Dr. Best, after these inquiries, resigned his office in the Institution, and assigned the badness of his health as the reason.

We proceed next to a subject which occupied so much of the attention of the Committee, that the evidence relating to it amounts to one-third of the minutes annexed to their Report—we mean the state of Bethlem Hopital. On this, however, we are compelled to be very short.

The first thing which strikes the inquirer with regard to this place is, the difficulties thrown in the way of inspection.

Mr. Wakefield was asked by the Committee,

“ Had you any difficulty in obtaining an entrance into the hospital? —I originally went to Bethlem Hospital with a written order from a governor. Mr. Alavoine the then steward said, he was extremely sorry that he could not show me the hospital, as he could have done the week before; but that a resolution of twenty years standing had been revived, to prevent any persons seeing that hospital but in company with a governor; and that in consequence of something which had been publicly said at a meeting, which had been held at the City of London Tavern. I asked Mr. Alavoine who were the governors; he said it was more than his place was worth to tell. He held in his hand a printed list of the governors; I requested permission to look at it; he said he could not allow me to do so; that Mr. Poynder, the secretary, who lived at Bridewell Hospital, would furnish me with a copy of the list of governors. In consequence of which I sent two persons on Friday the 22d of April, 1814, to the office of Mr. Poynder, clerk of Bethlem Hospital, who asked his clerk for a list of the governors of Bethlem Hospital; the clerk said, ‘ I cannot give a list; Mr. Poynder is below stairs. On furnishing a list, the fee charged by Mr. Poynder must be paid.’ ‘ What is the fee?’ ‘ One guinea.’ Mr. Poynder now entered from below stairs, and finally refused to give the person I sent a list of the gover-

nors. He, however, forwarded me a list in the course of a few days." (Report, p. 13.)

Mr. Wakefield states, that the first time he endeavoured to see Bethlem, the Governor, on whom he had prevailed to accompany him, Mr. Alderman Cox, whose feelings were overpowered before they had seen one half of the house, being unable to attend him, he was not allowed to proceed, even while the Alderman remained in the steward's room. Introduced on a subsequent day by another governor,

"At this visit," says the witness, "attended by the steward of the hospital, and likewise by a female keeper, we first proceeded to visit the women's galleries: one of the side rooms contained about ten patients, each chained by one arm or leg to the wall; the chain allowing them merely to stand up by the bench or form fixed to the wall, or to sit down on it. The nakedness of each patient was covered by a blanket-gown only; the blanket-gown is a blanket formed something like a dressing-gown, with nothing to fasten it with in front; this constitutes the whole covering; the feet even were naked. One female in this side room, thus chained, was an object remarkably striking; she mentioned her maiden and married names, and stated that she had been a teacher of languages; the keepers described her as a very accomplished lady, mistress of many languages, and corroborated her account of herself. The Committee can hardly imagine a human being in a more degraded and brutalizing situation than that in which I found this female, who held a coherent conversation with us, and was of course fully sensible of the mental and bodily condition of those wretched beings, who, equally without clothing, were closely chained to the same wall with herself. Unaware of the necessities of nature, some of them, though they contained life, appeared totally inanimate and unconscious of existence. The few minutes which we passed with this lady did not permit us to form a judgment of the degree of restraint to which she ought to be subject; but I unhesitatingly affirm, that her confinement with patients in whom she was compelled to witness the most disgusting idiocy, and the most terrifying distraction of the human intellect, was injudicious and improper. She intreated to be allowed pencil and paper, for the purpose of amusing herself with drawing, which were given to her by one of the gentlemen with me. Many of these unfortunate women were locked up in their cells, naked and chained on straw, with only one blanket for a covering." (Report, p. 11.)

"In the men's wing in the side room, six patients were chained close to the wall, five handcuffed, and one locked to the wall by the right arm as well as by the right leg; he was very noisy; all were naked, except as to the blanket gown or a small rug on his shoulders, and without shoes; one complained much of the coldness of his feet; one of us felt them, they were very cold. The patients in this room, except the noisy one, and the poor lad with cold feet, who was lucid when we saw him, were dreadful idiots; their nakedness and their mode of confinement gave this room the complete appearance of a dog-kennel. From

the patients not being classed, some appear objects of resentment to the others ; we saw a quiet civil man, a soldier, a native of Poland, brutally attacked by another soldier, who, we were informed by the keepers, always singled out the Pole as an object of resentment : they said, there were no means of separating these men, except by locking one up in solitary confinement. Whilst looking at some of the bed-lying patients, a man arose naked from his bed, and had deliberately and quietly walked a few paces from his cell-door along the gallery ; he was instantly seized by the keepers, thrown into his bed, and leg-locked, without inquiry or observation : chains are universally substituted for the strait-waistcoat. In the men's wing were about 75 or 76 patients, with two keepers and an assistant, and about the same number of patients on the women's side ; the patients were in no way distinguished from each other as to disease, than as those who were not walking about or chained in the side-rooms, were lying stark naked upon straw on their bedsteads, each in a separate cell, with a single blanket or rug, in which the patient usually lay huddled up, as if impatient of cold, and generally chained to the bed-place in the shape of a trough ; about one-fifth were in this state, or chained in the side-rooms. It appeared that the wet patients, and all who were inclined to lie a-bed, were allowed to do so, from being less troublesome in that state than when up and dressed. The end window towards Fore-street was the chief source of entertainment to the patients ; they seemed greatly to enjoy the sight of the people walking, and to derive great pleasure from our visit." (Report, p. 11, 12.)

We come now to a case which seems, from the pains they have taken to throw light upon it, to have made a deep impression upon the members of the Committee. Mr. Wakefield is still the witness who speaks.

" In one of the cells on the lower gallery we saw William Norris ; he stated himself to be 55 years of age, and that he had been confined about 14 years ; that in consequence of attempting to defend himself from what he conceived the improper treatment of his keeper, he was fastened by a long chain, which passing through a partition, enabled the keeper, by going into the next cell, to draw him close to the wall at pleasure ; that to prevent this, Norris muffled the chain with straw, so as to hinder it passing through the wall ; that he afterwards was confined in the manner we saw him, namely, a stout iron ring was riveted round his neck, from which a short chain passed to a ring made to slide upwards or downwards on an upright massive iron bar, more than six feet high, inserted into the wall. Round his body a strong iron bar about two inches wide was riveted ; on each side the bar was a circular projection, which being fashioned to and inclosing each of his arms, pinioned them close to his sides. This waist bar was secured by two similar bars which, passing over his shoulders, were riveted to the waist bar both before and behind. The iron ring round his neck was connected to the bars on his shoulders, by a double link. From each of these bars another short chain passed to the ring on the upright iron bar. We were informed he was enabled to raise himself, so as to stand against

the wall, on the pillow of his bed in the trough bed in which he lay ; but it is impossible for him to advance from the wall in which the iron bar is soldered, on account of the shortness of his chains, which were only twelve inches long. It was, I conceive, equally out of his power to repose in any other position than on his back, the projections which on each side of the waist bar inclosed his arms, rendering it impossible for him to lie on his side, even if the length of the chains from his neck and shoulders would permit it. His right leg was chained to the trough ; in which he had remained thus engaged and chained more than twelve years. To prove the unnecessary restraint inflicted on this unfortunate man, he informed us that he had for some years been able to withdraw his arms from the manacles which encompassed them. He then withdrew one of them, and observing an expression of surprise, he said, that when his arms were withdrawn, he was compelled to rest them on the edges of the circular projections, which was more painful than keeping them within. His position, we were informed, was mostly lying down, and that as it was inconvenient to raise himself and stand upright, he very seldom did so ; that he read a great deal of books of all kinds, history, lives, or any thing that the keepers could get him ; the newspaper every day, and conversed perfectly coherent on the passing topics and the events of the war, in which he felt particular interest. On each day that we saw him he discoursed coolly, and gave rational and deliberate answers to the different questions put to him. The whole of this statement relative to William Norris was confirmed by the keepers." (Report, p. 12.)

Dr. Monro, the physician, and Mr. Haslam, the apothecary of the hospital, were, on this case, very severely cross-examined by the Committee, and most conspicuously treated as persons, particularly Haslam, from whom it was necessary to *extort* the truth. Haslam endeavoured to screen himself, by stating that he had at first proposed a different mode of confinement, while the Governors had preferred that of which the Committee had heard the description. He was asked if he had ever remonstrated against it, or so much as expressed any disapprobation of it. He confessed that he never had. Dr. Monro was asked the same questions, and constrained to answer to the same effect.

They next endeavoured to obviate the conclusions which they but too plainly saw were likely to be drawn against them, by stating it as their conviction, that no better mode of confining this patient could be devised : the reasons were, that he was peculiarly ferocious and powerful ; and that his wrists and hands were so constructed, that he could extricate himself from handcuffs. The Committee thought it necessary to do more than to leave this affirmation to be contradicted by the reasoning faculties of every man who heard it. They put questions for the purpose of publicly exhibiting the opinions of the most experienced of the men who came before them.

Mr. Thomas Bakewell was asked, "Have you ever had in your custody maniacs of a very outrageous description, who were supposed to be extremely dangerous to their keeper, and even to themselves?" The answer he returned was this: "I never considered any as dangerous to myself, I have had many very violent. I consider coercion as necessary for the sake only of the patient himself, and should use it while he was in a violent state; but I should despise the keeper who feared them himself." He adds, what is worthy of particular attention, "but these paroxysms never continue."—"Do you apprehend that the mode of confinement you have already described was sufficient for the most outrageous maniac you ever saw? Certainly; the strait waistcoat is alone sufficient, making their feet secure, so that they cannot kick. The strait waistcoat is the best thing possible."

Mr. Thomas Dunstan, the master of St. Luke's, was asked, "Do you know any thing of the management of Bethlem Hospital?—I went to see a man who was confined there, and thought it was very improperly done; his name, I think, was Norris. Have you had many instances of persons quite, or nearly as outrageous as that man?—Yes; a great many in my time. Did you ever think it necessary to confine any one of them, in a manner at all resembling that in which Norris was confined?—I never did. Agreeably to the experience you have now had of forty years, can you conceive, in any case, it could be necessary to keep a man chained down to his bed for nine years together?—No; nor nine weeks."

Mr. Warburton, who keeps private houses to a greater extent than any other man in the kingdom, being asked to what, in the case of a very violent patient, whose hands slipped out of handcuffs, he would have recourse, answered, "To a very stout strait waistcoat. I never saw a man so bad yet, that could not be held by a strait waistcoat. We must make it proportionately strong. The most violent pauper lunatic never required confinement beyond a leg-lock and manacles; and I never yet saw a lunatic that at certain times, under the guidance of a keeper, might not be allowed some liberty to walk about."

The historian of the "Retreat at York" says, "Neither chains nor corporal punishment are tolerated, on any pretext, in this establishment."—"If it be true," says that excellent book, "that oppression makes a wise man mad, is it to be supposed that stripes, and insults, and injuries, for which the receiver knows no cause, are calculated to make a madman wise? or would they not exasperate his disease, and excite his resentment? May we not hence most clearly perceive why furious mania is almost a stranger in the Retreat? Why all the patients wear clothes, and are generally induced to adopt orderly habits?"

Dr. Monro hazarded a most extraordinary opinion; that the exquisite cruelty to which this man was doomed, he had not feeling to suffer from; an opinion which it is only necessary to adopt to lay a foundation for unrelenting inhumanity. "Is it probable that the greater want of comfort produced additional irritation? No: I am not aware that it did. He seemed to me to be a most insensible man; little better than a brute; he had not the least feeling whatever. I do not recollect that I ever heard him complain of the fetters that he was confined by. He was perfectly lost to all sensibility whatever.—Do you mean all sense as well as sensibility? I mean, all feeling.—All corporeal feeling, or feeling of mind, too? Feeling of mind too. He appeared to me to have lost his mental feeling entirely." Yet, in answer to other questions, the sensibility of this same man is affirmed to be so exquisite, that a look which he disapproves of is sufficient to throw him into a paroxysm of rage. Haslam affirms that he *disdained* to complain; and such was his high-mindedness, such his firmness of purpose, that he held to his resolution through nine years of unabating torture! The *excess* of sensibility was by this very sagacious, or very honest doctor, sincerely or insincerely, represented as a total want of all feeling, bodily and mental!—A man "lost to all sensibility whatever;" who (it stands in evidence) had a passion for reading; and, chained to his couch, felt a deep interest in the political events of his age! Who conversed rationally with gentlemen of the Committee, and told them he should be sorry to be trusted altogether without restraint; because he thought a sudden provocation might still excite him to mischief!

Other particulars, indicative of most objectionable management in this great Institution, we are constrained reluctantly to omit. Among the fruits of the inquiry which has begun to take place, we have to announce a great change in the mode of confining Norris; the dismission of the matron and steward; and a confessed improvement in the condition of the house, with a vast reduction of the number of patients in the state of suffering, since the appointment of their successors.

It is highly necessary to remark, that no system of inspection has existed for this great establishment. It is in evidence that the governors hardly ever took cognizance of any beyond a few particulars. The management, which was immediately in the hands of the matron and steward, was entrusted almost entirely to the controul and superintendance of the medical officers. And gentlemen of that description, as far as a conclusion is to be drawn from the two cases of the York Asylum and Bethlem Hospital, appear, where either their ease or their emolument is concerned, to constitute a very imperfect security.

One particular respecting the medical system pursued in the hospital is so remarkable, that all mention of it cannot be omitted; *periodical* bathings, bleedings, vomitings, and purgings! The physicking operations commence about the middle of May.— Every patient is first bled twice; next receives six emetics, one per week; and after that a purgative dose once every week, till the term of Michaelmas. This is the general constant discipline of the house; nor is any patient exempted from it, except when something particular in the case of the individual appears specially to demand it.

We cannot forbear quoting the very emphatical words, in which the Committee have adverted, in their very short provisional report, to the circumstances of the two establishments with which our attention has been occupied so long:—“As the governors of the Asylum at York called the attention of the other house of parliament by petition, in the last session, to the management of the establishment, in order to show that it was necessary to subject it to the provisions of a bill then depending respecting madhouses; and as the governors of Bethlem succeeded on that occasion, in obtaining a clause while the bill was in the house, for a partial exemption from the provisions of the act; your committee are desirous of attracting the attention of the house to the parts of the evidence which relate to those two establishments.”

The circumstances of that bill, to which allusion here is made, are not a little remarkable. Its provisions were mostly recommended by the College of Physicians, and were such, that the gentleman who brought it in, and who is now prosecuting the subject with a spirit which does him the greatest honour, we verily believe is ashamed of them. To mention no more of what among these provisions seemed to have a tendency to render the state of circumstances worse upon the whole than it was before, it may suffice to say, that by the advice of the College of Physicians all public institutions for the insane were to be declared exempt from inspection; and private madhouses were to be subjected to a heavy tax, in the benefits of which the members of that learned body were to be the principal sharers.

We have now proceeded as far as it is possible for us to continue our statements descriptive of the existing provisions for the insane. The few remaining pages which it is in our power to devote to the subject must be appropriated to the consideration of what is possible to be done for the improvement of those provisions. Of the many important services which the press renders to the cause of human nature, one that should be perpetually exacted of it is to aid the legislature by its suggestions, whenever a case of any difficulty either is, or ought to be, taken in

hand for legislative regulation. As it is more than manifest that legislators can never have too much knowledge upon any subject on which they undertake to legislate, and seldom indeed have enough, it is equally manifest that their minds should lie completely open to the reception of knowledge; that they should be incessantly and eagerly on the search for it; and that they can seldom look to any source so prolific in assistance as the press.

With an attention exerted, as that of British legislators now is, to the state of the provisions for the treatment of the insane, there is evidently no occasion to stimulate them to new legislative exertions. Perhaps it is more necessary to caution them against legislating too much. It is well known that this is an error into which legislatures have great temptation to run: it is also well known that it is an error of a very mischievous nature, from which many of the worst effects of legislation daily proceed: and it is an error, from the danger of which we are not able to regard the British legislature, on the present occasion, as altogether exempt. We deem it highly expedient to enter a caveat against it.

The class of persons for whose care a proper system of provisions is now required, is the class of those whose minds are in such a state that they are not fit to be entrusted with their own actions; and who, therefore, require to be placed under a guard. The mental infirmity may be such as to produce actions hurtful to themselves, or hurtful to others.

The objects, it is evident, at which, in such a case, legislative regulation should aim, are *three*: In the first place, that all those persons, who require this species of guard, should be placed under it: In the second place, that none but those who require it should be placed under it: In the third place, that all those who are placed under it, should be placed in circumstances as favourable to their well-being and recovery as possible. We shall offer a few remarks under each of these heads.

1. Provision ought to be made, that all those persons, the state of whose minds is such that they are unfit to be trusted with their own actions, should, without any exception, be placed under the proper restraint. This is the more necessary to be strongly recommended, as it has, hitherto, been almost entirely overlooked, while, in point of importance, it would be difficult to place it too high. Let us endeavour to conceive what would happen if insane persons were left to wander without controul; We shall then have a conception of the evil in its totality. Would not society be rendered almost insupportable? That portion of the insane whose disease produces actions hurtful to others, would place every man under the dread of assassination, into whose presence any of them were liable to come; and

men would be compelled to destroy them like other dangerous animals, or be destroyed by their means.

With regard to the other class of the insane, whose infirmity produces actions hurtful to themselves, it is enough to say, that no state of suffering in which they can be placed by others, can surpass that in which the greater part of them would place themselves. A large proportion of them, indeed, would place themselves beyond the reach of suffering by a voluntary death. It is, therefore, abundantly certain, that both the well-being of society at large, and the well-being of the unhappy subjects of the disease, require that none of them should be left at liberty; and in no country in which the legislation is universally good, will an effectual provision for this purpose be wanting.

In the present state of this country, there is no great danger that madmen, known to be dangerous, should be left in possession of their liberty. The fear which is felt for themselves by men who can put in execution the powers of restraint, insures the application of them. There are two cases which chiefly require to be looked after. The first is that of indigent persons, not dangerous to others, of whom nobody takes charge. Of these it ought to be rendered imperative on their relations, when in adequate circumstances, or on parishes, when they are not, to take the proper care. The next case is that of incipient madness, for which we are aware that an adequate provision is not easy to be made. It will be something to have called to it the attention of the legislature, and to have produced a deeper sense of its importance than hitherto men in general appear to have possessed. If attention were paid to the number of murders perpetrated by the insane, upon themselves, their relatives, and others, either before they have been conceived to be insane, or before the disease has been conceived to be so violent as to require constraint, they would be found to surpass, in every year, the number of those who suffer a violent death in this country, by all other means taken together. The mass of mischief which is annually incurred by inattention to the beginnings of madness, and by leaving those on whom mental disease is encroaching, too long exempt from controul, is perhaps the greatest to which the calamity of madness, in the present state of its management in this country, really and truly gives birth. An act of parliament therefore ought, at the very least, to afford every encouragement for the application of restraint to persons in the very earliest stages of madness. Even mistakes, in this case, where no bad intention is rendered sufficiently probable, ought, in all cases, to be venial. The danger to personal liberty which may thence be apprehended, would, under a proper system of inspec-

tion, be so very small, that it is altogether unworthy of comparison with the evil which it would prevent. A proper system of inspection would effectually cut off all the motives which any individual could have for the wrongful confinement of another; and it scarcely can be conceived that an attempt, from which nothing could be expected but detection, disgrace, and punishment, would ever be made. At the same time the decision ought not to be left entirely to relatives; whom frequently a false tenderness, and more frequently a false shame, induce to disguise the appearances of the disease, and bear with the patient, till the mischief is produced. A proper tribunal ought to be created, to which, in the case of any individual, it should be competent for any body to make application. As soon as the existence of disease is rendered probable, temporary restraint should be employed; because, if necessary, it need not be long: and the inconvenience to the individual is nothing, compared with the danger from which he himself, or others, are saved. How this tribunal is to be formed, it is for the practical wisdom of the legislature to decide.

2. Provision ought to be made sufficient to prevent the confinement of persons, as insane, for whom no such confinement is required. To this case the whole force in this country of legislative exertion, hitherto bestowed on the subject, has almost exclusively been applied. We are a people to whom it has become habitual to make the application of restraint to the individual a matter of prodigious importance; and our usual language, and usual feelings, confound two cases which are remarkably distinct.

The confinement of individuals, at the discretion of the high officers wielding the powers of government, it is impossible to regard as of too much importance; because the friends and defenders of good government, and its securities, might be the men on whom such confinement would fall; and the loss of every security for good government might be the result.

But there is another species of restraint which mere individuals may be tempted to produce, for some private advantage to themselves. Against this injury, all reasonable securities should be taken. But provided the impossibility is created, which it easily may, of continuing this injury without detection and punishment for any considerable length of time, a greater evil ought not to be incurred for the sake of avoiding another which can in no sense be regarded as considerable.

Although it was upon this point that the whole stress of the act of the 14th of the King was made to bear, the security which it provides is exceedingly imperfect. It required that no patient of a certain class should be received into a madhouse without an attestation of madness signed by a medical man. But the signa-

ture of the most ignorant apothecary is sufficient: and what is still more remarkable,—for the unhappy race of paupers no certificate is required. The officers of any parish may lodge in a madhouse whomsoever they please. A house containing one patient needs no licence, and receives no visitation. Is any body at a loss to see that, under these circumstances, a man who has money to pay for dishonourable services, can never find it very arduous to overcome the barriers intended to prevent the confinement of improper persons in a madhouse? Under the present mode of inspection, too, even where it is most efficiently performed about London, the inspecting commissioners themselves confess, that persons might be retained in the houses of confinement, and perfectly concealed from their view; while in the country, so imperfectly are the securities taken for official inspection, that it is hardly performed at all. Yet under all these facilities, instances of undue confinement are exceedingly rare; probably not so much as one occurs in the whole kingdom during a number of years. The reason is, that, in this country, the eye of the public is penetrating; and the voice of the public has an organ by which it can make itself be heard. In the private houses, moreover, where the reputation of the house is the fortune of the master, it would not be easy to give a bribe which would compensate the risk of detection. No; if any man meditated such an enormity, the public institutions are the places for him; where the leading people are so little under controul, and risk so little by violating their duties.

For ourselves, we do not see that provisions of great strictness about the admission of patients can be formed, without incurring the danger of excluding incipient madness, from which at present so great a mass of evil proceeds. Nor do we see that provisions of great strictness relative to admission are at all required. The skill of the legislature should be exerted to render it impossible that undue confinement can ever be long; and if this be accomplished, a remedy for undue admission is also obtained. What is a security against the one, is an equal security against the other. Both objects may thus be gained, and gained in the best manner, by only one set of provisions. Two effects may be produced by a single cause. This is legislative ingenuity of the highest sort. A proper system of inspection—an inspection which no abuses can escape, will, it is manifest, be competent alone to the production of these effects. And without such inspection, no security which can be provided will be found adequate to the end. Inspection, therefore, an efficient machinery of inspection, is that to the formation of which the genius of the members of parliament should be strenuously bent. In this one instrument, under a few simple rules, they will find the remedy for all abuses.

3. Provision ought to be made, that all those persons who are

placed in confinement, under the character of insane, shall be placed in circumstances as favourable as possible to their well-being, including present comfort, and future recovery.

It will not require any illustration to prove, that the chief instrument which the legislature can employ to ensure a proper treatment to patients under confinement, is that of inspection. In this case, inspection is almost the only security lying within the sphere of legislative choice. Now what is meant by inspection, in the character of a security, is a provision created by the legislature for making fully known the treatment received by every human being in the nation under confinement as insane; and rendering concealment or deception altogether impossible. Revealment, however, if made to those alone who will disregard it, and give themselves but little concern about the abuses which may exist, will be made to little purpose. It is necessary to find some class of persons in whom such inattention can have no chance of existing. We know one such class, and only one; that is, the public itself, in its great corporate capacity. If means are taken to make the public acquainted with the circumstances of every individual who is improperly treated in a madhouse, there will be no improper treatment. If this is left undone, we cannot conceive any other security, in spite of which abuses will not find a way to creep in.

The grand objection to publicity, in the case of madhouses,—to an efficient, curative degree of publicity,—is the feelings of the relatives of the patients; because they have in general a violent desire to conceal from the public the existence in the family of such a disease. But it surely does deserve consideration, how far these feelings should be allowed to stand in opposition to the well-being of those very relatives who are confined; how far a purpose of deception with regard to the public, and a purpose of cruelty with regard to the relatives, should be allowed to prevail over the claim, which humanity urges for those arrangements which alone are adequate to ensure the proper treatment of the insane.

It would require a far greater space than we can now afford, to explain sufficiently our own ideas with regard to the inspection of madhouses. One thing we may state very shortly, and with some chance of its carrying its own conviction along with it;—that the more of publicity the legislature can infuse into the system of inspection, the greater the security against all abuses will they be sure to create.

In the existing act of parliament, the College of Physicians is looked up to as the only proper instrument of inspection, at least for the principal part of the business, that about the metropolis. A similar arrangement was made in the bill of the session pre-

ceding the last, to which, dictated in a great measure by the College of Physicians, we have found an allusion in the present Report. From this error we perceive indications, that the present meritorious Committee are pretty effectually weaned; we have, therefore, but little apprehension that it will disgrace a new act of parliament.

There are strong reasons against trusting this inspection to any confined body, with an *esprit du corps*; but stronger reasons against the College of Physicians than almost any other that can be named. The physicians are of all men those of whom the interests, in this case, are most likely to stand in opposition to their duty. The quantity of medical practice which is required in madhouses, and the quantity of medical fees which is extracted out of them, are both very great. The favour of the keepers of these houses is to a physician, therefore, a matter of great importance; and an understanding between them and the visiting physicians is a natural result.

Besides, the constitution of the College of Physicians forms another decisive objection. It excludes all the physicians bred at the most celebrated medical school in the world,—the University of Edinburgh; and a very large proportion of the most eminent of the medical practitioners in London.

The error of resorting to physicians for the inspection of madhouses seems to have arisen from the belief, that it was by medicine that the mental disease was to be cured. Experience seems to have ascertained that medicine, unless as in the case of other individuals, for their bodily complaints, is almost or altogether unavailing with regard to the insane; and that the physician, as such, has no peculiar qualification for judging of the management of a madhouse.

Against another error, into which, under the direction of the College of Physicians, the framers of the bill to which we have twice alluded were drawn, that of exempting from inspection the *public* madhouses, the legislature are now, by the evidence this Committee has laid before them, pretty effectually secured. So far from not standing in need of inspection, of all the places for the reception of the insane, the public establishments are those which stand in need of it the most.

Besides the misconduct of those who have the management of houses for the reception of the insane, there are other causes of the undue suffering borne by this helpless portion of the race, for which the legislature should perform all that is possible towards providing a remedy.

In the first place, there is a considerable proportion of persons bereft of their reason, who are not placed in any situation which is fit for them. Some are allowed to wander about, at their own

discretion. In Ireland this is the case with almost all, excepting the very dangerous, and the rich. Others are confined in parish work-houses; and some in gaols. The sufferings of all these classes are in general extreme. And in many cases the annoyance is immense which they create to other people. It is undoubtedly of the last importance, that no insane person should either be abandoned to his own wayward inclinations, or be confined in such exceptionable places as a workhouse or a prison.

Something has recently been done by the legislature to compel parishes, where a county asylum for the insane exists, to send thither their deranged paupers. If a law were made to compel parishes to send to some licensed madhouse the whole of their pauper insane, it would accelerate prodigiously the building of county asylums. In one respect public establishments of this description would be desirable. The buildings might be skilfully adapted to the purpose for which they are designed: whereas the houses which have been hitherto employed by the owners of private establishments, have been built for other purposes, and are never well adapted to the confinement of the insane. What constitutes the excellence of a building for this purpose is the facilities which it affords to inspection. We are extremely happy to perceive that the Committee have annexed to their Report the plan of a building for the confinement of the insane, upon the panopticon principle—a building so contrived, that from a central spot every part of it is visible, and, as often as necessary, every inmate whom it contains. Upon the virtues of this admirable contrivance we have at present no opportunity to dilate. It is sufficiently evident what powers it yields to the stated master or superintendent, to check every instance of malversation on the part of servants; and what powers it affords to inspectors of all descriptions to detect abuses on the part of those to whom the government of the house belongs. Without such a contrivance as this, no vigilance on the part of the governing individuals can prevent innumerable instances of negligence, and other kinds of misconduct, in their subservient agents.

Mr. Samuel Tuke, in his Pamphlet entitled "Practical Hints," &c. disapproves, we see, of the panopticon principle. We are not much surprised at this; for though he has well described the Retreat at York, and done a great service by holding up the principle of mildness and beneficence, as the grand principle of management in the cure of the insane; he is evidently not a man of great force, or great reach of mind. Besides, he has a plan of his own; and it is difficult for men of stronger minds than Mr. Tuke to like a better plan, when it would supersede another by which their fancy is already engrossed.

His reason, however, for disapproving the panopticon principle in the construction of madhouses is curious. It would not be agreeable to the servants to be always seen. To bad servants assuredly it would not; and for that very reason it ought to be so much the more agreeable to those to whom the feelings of the patients are a matter of regard. To really good servants the being seen is not a punishment, but a reward; because they are then assured that their merits are not concealed, and that they shall receive the applause which they deserve. Besides, it would be easy to afford to the servants in a panopticon madhouse any degree whatsoever of privacy, which their comfort might seem to require; at the same time that the master would enjoy the inestimable advantage of placing them all under his inspection, as often as he chose.

Whenever the houses of private owners are built upon the best principle, there is in them a security for good management, a security which never can be obtained in public establishments,—the power of competition, on which too great a value can hardly ever be set.

There is another important cause of undue suffering to the insane, a cause of which the inquiries of the Committee have set abundant evidence before them; we mean, the absence of sufficient pay to afford the accommodations which well-being requires. We have seen that in the houses of private owners at least, this is almost the only cause of undue suffering; for it is attested by the visiting commissioners, that more is done by them for their money than the commissioners can easily see how it is possible to do. Such are the beneficial effects of competition! This, however, is a cause of suffering, which extends to the most numerous portion by far of this pitiable class of our fellow creatures. It deserves the most serious consideration of the legislature. Whether they will deem it expedient to compel parishes both to send their insane paupers to a madhouse, and to afford with them a sufficient compensation for comfortable accommodations, we much doubt. But there is one thing which, at any rate, they may easily do; and which we conjure them, by every thing dear to the human mind, to do; and that is, if they perform nothing to better the condition of these sufferers, to do nothing to make it worse. They are already deprived of accommodations necessary to well-being, for want of money sufficient to pay for them. Do not, then, tax these unhappy beings; tearing from them a fresh portion of their inadequate accommodations! It is absurd to regard a tax upon a madhouse as a tax upon the master. Think of an act of parliament to tax madness!—and pauper madness, maintained by charity!—a tax upon pauperism!—a tax upon charity! And yet

not only does the existing act impose taxes upon madhouses (and one of the principal objects of the visiting physicians is to act as surveyors for the levying of this tax, which forms a fund chiefly at their disposal), but, under their direction, according to the bill to which we have already so often alluded, brought into parliament in the session which preceded the last, a still more oppressive tax was about to be imposed. It is, therefore, of urgent importance to warn the legislature against this egregious solecism in legislation.

It has been ascertained by the evidence before the Committee, that an evil exists of great magnitude in the vices of relatives, who, from avarice and other motives, without the excuse of poverty, withhold from the insane the accommodations which they require. It is not easy to discover any unobjectionable remedy to this evil, except one, and that is, the sanative power of *publicity*. Let in light upon the circumstances of madhouses. Render it impossible for relatives to prevent such misconduct from being made known to the world; and you may rest assured that it will very rarely take place. Competition and publicity; these are the grand rectifying principles throughout the business of society. Where these are enabled to act with unimpeded force, the course of human affairs is easily kept in the best possible order.

There are two other things which, though not exactly in their place, we cannot forbear even yet to mention.

The first is, that all servants and other officers in houses of every description for the insane, should be effectually interdicted from taking fees, or other gratuities, in any shape, on account of the patients. The servants should be paid by their masters, and have no other pay. The mischief which is occasioned by fees paid to the instruments of confinement in this country, in gaols and other places, is prodigious. The legislature, at the instance of a member of the madhouse committee, has at last opened its eyes to the enormity of gaol fees, and has taken a large stride towards their abolition. We hope it will perceive the same necessity for abolishing what partakes so much of the nature of gaol fees, gratuities to the servants in madhouses. If a keeper hopes to be paid for good behaviour to a patient, it is a premium for bad behaviour till the payment is extorted. It is an infallible cause of neglect and cruelty to those who are already the greatest sufferers, those who have nothing to pay. Besides, the habit of taking fees has a bad effect upon the general character: it produces a greedy, grasping, unsatisfied, mercenary, selfish, unfeeling disposition.

The next of the two things which we have still a desire to point out for attention, is the source of evil which is necessarily opened

in permitting any of the leading officers of the great charitable institutions for the insane, to set up private madhouses of their own, or to become sharers in the emoluments of the madhouses of any other person. A temptation is thus created to convert the public madhouse into a recruiting house for the private one. Who sees not to what abuses this paves the way? The doctors Monro and Sutherland, the two physicians of Bethlem and St. Luke's, in the metropolis, have each of them private madhouses of their own; and Mr. Dunstan, the master of St. Luke's, has a connection with Mr. Warburton, the greatest owner of private madhouses in the kingdom. All this does require legislative interference.







